

2021 Eugene Equity Panel Update September 2021

The 2021 Equity Panel completed its Summer quarter of meetings in August. This Panel is comprised of eight local social justice organizations and advise staff on programs related to Transportation, Housing, and Climate Resiliency. This summary gives an overview of the valuable feedback that this pilot model has already provided staff. It has been a meaningful process in developing community relationships, bringing transparency to City of Eugene work, and making direct connections between sustainability- and equity-related issues across multiple programs.

Summer Panel Meetings & Themes

The Panel met four times from June to August and shared feedback on developing equity-centered strategies in housing and transportation programs and projects, including the Housing Implementation Pipeline and shared mobility (bike share and e-scooter share). Below are a few themes that emerged during those meetings:

Housing Implementation Pipeline

- Housing Continuum: needs to better represent the extremely – very low-income affordability and transitional housing /Permanent Supportive Housing strategies
- Rental assistance program: must address financial and resource barriers for people experiencing disabilities, the unhoused, people with a history of criminalization, and those who are undocumented
- Renter support and protections: need to improve communication strategies (innovative advertising) to ensure broad access and knowledge of assistance and services offered
- Community Land Trust strategies: could better support cooperative housing models that can provide broader and specialized services for people, especially those experiencing disabilities

Shared Mobility

- Escooter share: consider safety concerns for those experiencing disabilities; identify clear recourse for unsafe behaviors, as well as accessible customer support and feedback mechanisms
- Service fees: be flexible with sharing fees charged by location and waive identified low-income locations; be flexible with definitions and reduce barriers for qualified individuals to get reduced fare fees
- Paying for shared mobility: consider challenges for unbanked populations and create opportunities for people to access shared mobility through alternative forms of payment
- Communication and outreach: expand communication and engagement strategies to address language access opportunities; work with local partners serving low-income, BIPOC, and disabled communities

Fall Meetings & the Future of the Panel

The Equity Panel reconvened for the Fall quarter on September 14 and will continue meeting bi-monthly through May 2022. City of Eugene staff from Transportation Planning, Community Development, and the Sustainability Program will be working with the Panel in the Fall on recommendations for climate resiliency planning, transportation options, Vision Zero strategies, and ongoing discussions around Housing strategies.

Here are the awesome community organizations that have offered their time, experience, and expertise to be part of this group:

Community Alliance of Lane County (CALC)

CALC is an activist organization that works to expose and challenge community and institutional forms of prejudice and oppression. They mobilize community members to influence elected and appointed officials and work with other social service and social change organizations to impact social justice efforts.

Community Outreach through Radical Empowerment (CORE)

CORE supports, empowers, and advocates for young people in our community who are surviving the effects of poverty, homelessness, and other adversities. They strive to make young people's voices heard in our community through their Street Outreach Alliance Project, The Lens Program, Street Feed, and Harm Reduction Distribution Services.

Eugene – Springfield NAACP

The NAACP works to secure securing civil liberties for black people and other people of color through their role in the advancement of key civil rights efforts and legislation. The NAACP's Environmental and Climate Justice (ECJ) Program helps to promote widespread awareness and engagement of the urgency of and need for climate action, and of the inextricable connections between environmental harms, climate change, and the historic processes that have resulted in economic, health, and environmental inequities that burden BIPOC populations.

Lane Independent Living Alliance (LILA)

LILA is a cross-disability, community-based, nonprofit organization that is designed and operated by individuals with disabilities. The center offers disability advocacy and resources to support individuals' self-sufficiency, self-determination, and self-empowerment. They work at the intersection of disability and race to address social inequities and environmental concerns.

Lane East Asian Network (LEAN)

LEAN is a grassroots organization led by a small group of Asian Eugene residents, including women, femmes, and non-binary folx. They uplift the voices of East Asians, BIPOC, and advocate for transgender rights through activism and educational events.

UO Sapsik'wafá (Teacher) Education Program

The Sapsik'wafá program works to strengthen Indigenous education by recruiting and training highly qualified American Indian/Alaskan Native teachers to serve high populated AI/AN serving schools and tribal communities. They work in consortium with the 9 federally recognized tribal nations in Oregon and education agencies across Oregon and the Pacific Northwest to actively shift western pedagogies and promote policies of change in education systems.

St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County

St. Vincent de Paul is Lane County's largest nonprofit human service organization and operates almost 1,500 units of affordable housing and two-day access shelters for families and individuals experiencing homelessness. They put environmental justice into action through reuse and recycling businesses that create offer low-barrier employment, foster long-term stability, and divert materials from our community's waste stream.

The Arc of Lane County

The Arc Lane County supports people who experience disabilities and their families to live full and meaningful lives in their community. They seek to help change oppressive systems through an intersectional lens and uplift people who have long been treated inequitably.